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STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE (SPR) CAVERN AND WELL CREEP-CLOSURE TESTS

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<u>Abstract</u>

This report briefly describes the history of West Hackberry cavern 11 and well 112, describes a creep/closure test, and presents the results of the test. At the test conditions from October 1981 through October 1983, cavern 11 produced an average of 60 barrels of brine per day. At the test conditions from March 1982 through August 1982, well 112 produced an average of I gallon of brine per day.

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<u>Introduction</u>

The development of mathematical models for prediction of cavern and well behavior must include predictions of closure due to salt creep as a function of pressure and time. In an effort to obtain actual field data for model verification, we decided to collect data from West Hackberry cavern 11 and well 112. Wells and caverns from other sites will also be evaluated in an effort to determine the effects of cavern shape, depth, salt properties, temperature, and possibly other variables. These data will provide the baseline for instrumentation performance and the baseline for cavern performance which is to be measured as part of the long-term monitoring plan.

History and Background

Well 11 was originally completed in 1962 as a brine producing well (Ref. 1). A well 11 workover in 1979 (Ref. 2) reconfigured the well but retained the 9 5/8 inch casing, and the well has been used as a slick hole. The cavern was formed through well 11 prior to mid-1977. The location of the cavern is shown in Figure 1, the cavern critical dimensions are shown in Figure 2, and well 11 configuration is shown in Figure 3.

Well 1 IA was completed in November 1978 (Ref. 3) and entered the cavern at 2943 ft. The well configuration is shown in Figure 4. Well 11B was completed in January 1979 (Ref. 4) and entered the cavern at 2959 ft. The well configuration is shown in Figure 5.

There were 6.5×10^6 bbl of sour crude in the cavern in September 1978 (Ref. 5), 6.4×10^6 bbl in December 1978, 7.5×10^6 bbl in April 1980, and 8.1×10^6 bbl in September 1980. Another 38,000 bbl were added in October 1981 to bring the total oil to 8.2×10^6 bbl.

Well 11-B was logged in November 1979 and showed an oil/brine interface at 3530 ft and an oil temperature of 101.5°F. The cavern was relogged in June 1980 and showed an oil/brine interface at 3614 ft and an oil temperature of 98°F. The cavern was relogged in June 1983 and showed an oil/brine interface at 3678 ft. A temperature log in September 1983 showed an oil temperature of 109°F. (Interface movement = 1.8 ft/mo and temperature increase = 0.28°F/mo since June 1980.)

Well 112 was completed in March 1981 (Ref. 6) to a depth of 5060 ft. The well configuration is shown in Figure 6. There was no piping connected to this well in March 1982, and it is therefore assumed to be configured as shown in Figure 6.

The descriptive information concerning the site is contained in the Site Characterization Report (Ref. 7) which was published in October 1980 and will be updated in 1983 with additional material properties data, revised salt contours, and other information.

The testing for cavern 11 closure was started in October 1981 when the cavern was shut in to allow the pressure to build up by cavern closure and thern all expansion of the oil. Prior to this time, the brine valves were open to the site brine line and the cavern brine pressure followed the brine line pressure.

The testing for well 112 closure was started when the well was shut in by the driller in March 1981, but the first brine bleed down was in April 1982. Effects due to thermal expansion of the brine in the well are considered negligible because the well fluids should have had adequate time to approach thermal equilibrium.

Testing WH Cavern 11

The test procedure that we use is to shut in the cavern to let the pressure increase and then bleed brine off to reduce the pressure as low as practical. The pressure instrumentation provides measurements of wellhead pressure by dial gauges read by the on-site 0 & M contractor (POSSI) and by two transducers coupled to an automated recording system. Brine flow is measured using a 2-inch turbine meter with flow data going directly to a totalizer. A diagram of the piping system is shown in Figure 7. The block diagram of the first data collection system is shown in Figure 8. There were continuing problems with this automated data collection: therefore, the data presented are a combination of dial gauge data corrected to psia and data from the automated system. The problems included moisture in the electrical system, lack of temperature control on the electronics, and repeated shut downs of the 110 VAC site power to the instrumentation system. As a result of these problems a different data collection system was installed in February 1983. A block diagram of this data collection system is shown in Figure 8A. This data collection system operated properly from February 1983 to October 1983 when the test was terminated.

The pressure and bleed down data are shown in Figures 9 and 10. Analyses of these data provide the following typical parameters for cavern 11:

```
cavern elasticity = 49 bbl/psi
salt elasticity = 2 x 10-6 bbl/bbl psi
cavern closure plus thermal expansion rate = 60 bbl/day
cavern pressure increase rate = 1.5 psi/day
```

In the latter half of 1982 POSSI was performing surface piping modifications which required cavern bleed down. The pressure instrumentation could not provide data during this period and the brine withdrawal was not measured. In September 1983 POSSI workover activities to remove the salt plug that was found in well 11 B when logging was attempted precluded collection of reliable brine pressure data at the manifold. We added a transducer on the oil manifold and monitored oil pressure as shown in Figure 9C.

Comparison values for other caverns are shown in Table 2, and the calculational details are included in Appendix I. The cavern pressurization rate is a function of the cavern pressure and of the time since the last bleed down as shown by the typical pressure curve in Figure 11. The early pressure increase after a bleed down may also be a function of the magnitude of pressure change during bleed down. The curve in Figure 11 is significantly nonlinear during the first few weeks after bleed down. There are undoubtedly many contributing factors involved in this behavior, but there are contributions from salt creep and the salt stress redistribution after any change in pressure (temperature is assumed to be constant). In a static cavern that has reached a steady state condition, the difference between internal pressure and the external pressure creates a stress redistribution in the salt. Any change in internal (or external) pressure will cause a change in salt creep rate and a redistribution of salt stress to reestablish the steady state condition and this redistribution takes time. After this stress redistribution is *complete". the remaining factor which causes the cavern pressure to increase with time is salt creep (temperature is assumed to be constant and solutioning is assumed to be insignificant). A more complete discussion of creep and stress distribution is presented in **Ref.** 15.

The cavern pressure decrease during brine removal is typically linear except during the first portion of the bleed down as shown in Figure 12. The reason for this early non-linearity has not been established, but phenomena like fluid viscosity and/or salt inertia could generate similar responses.

The test on WH 11 was terminated in October 1983 to allow the instrumentation to be calibrated and repaired prior to use on other cavern tests as directed by DOE Technical Directive Number 92.

Testing WH 112

During **testing we shut** in **the** well to let the pressure increase **and** then bled brine **off** to **reduce the** pressure as low as practical. **Wellhead** pressure data were obtained **from** dial **gauges** read **by POSSI. The** brine was bled into a five gallon container for volume **measurement. The pressure and** bleed **down data are shown in** Figures 13 and 14. Analyses **of these** data provide the following typical parameters for well 112:

```
well elasticity = .007 bbl/psi = .28 gal/psi
salt elasticity = 2.5 \times 10^{-6} bbl/bbl psi
well closure rate = .02 bbl/day = 1.0 gal/day
well pressure increase rate = 3.7 psi/day
```

The well pressure rise from March 198 1 to April 1982 is assumed to be 450 psi/413 day = 1.1 psi/day. The plots of pressure vs time and volume vs pressure exhibit the same general curve shapes as those for cavern 11 except for an apparent increase in gal/psi at very low pressures as shown in Figure 14. This is probably due to reduced bleed down rates and high creep rates at low pressure.

The test on 112 was terminated in August 1982 when the surface piping construction effort was started. Several attempts were made to restart the test after construction was completed but the data showed no pressure increase. The lack of pressure rise could have been due to wellhead valve leakage or to some other unknown cause.

Mathematical Models

An attempt has been made to perform a thermal analysis of West Hackberry Cavern 11 so that the pressure changes due to thermal expansion could be estimated. In order to perform a thermal analysis, boundary condition temperatures in the adjacent salt are required. Unfortunately, no temperature logs in the vicinity of this cavern are available. As a result, very rough estimates had to be used. Some temperature logs taken in West Hackberry cavern 6 between March and September of 1980 were available. Analyses of these data indicated that the temperature field in the dome around the cavern was best represented by a temperature of 126°F at a depth of 3580 feet and a gradient of 0.012°F/ft. A similar temperature field was assumed' to exist around West Hackberry cavern 11. There was no documented information within SPR of the leach or fill history of cavern 11 before July 1977. After this time a complicated oil fill schedule was recorded until October 1980. To simplify the calculations, this fill period was modeled in two stages: an oil fill to 6.4 million barrels in September 1978 and an oil fill to 8.2 million barrels in October 1980. The fill oil temperature was assumed to be 7CPF in each case. The temperature calculations were carried out through July 1982. The calculated heat flux into the cavern at this time was 421,000 Btu/hr. Given this heat flux, the rates of temperature and pressure change can be calculated as follows:

Temperature rise : $\frac{dT}{dt}$ =

$$\frac{421.000 \text{ BTU/hr x 24 hr/day}}{.464 \text{ BTU/lb°F x } 8.2 \text{ x } 10^6 \text{bbl x } 42 \text{ gal/bbl x } 7 \text{ lb/gal}} = .01°F/day$$

Pressure rise: $\frac{d\mathbf{p}}{dt} =$

$$\frac{4.5 \times 10^{-4} \text{bbl/bbl°F x .01°F/day} \times 8.2 \times 10^{6} \text{bbl}}{49 \text{ bbl/psi}} = .8 \text{ psi/day}$$

It should be re-emphasized that without some comparative temperature checkpoints this kind of calculation is at best an estimate with a low confidence factor. Also, the above calculated rates are only approximately correct at one time (July 1982). The cavern temperature rise is expected to be asymptotic to some upper temperature value. Thus, dT/dt will decrease and approach zero as the temperature of the cavern approaches an equilibrium value. At the present time, detailed analyses are being conducted to determine the time dependent behavior of the cavern fluid temperatures. These calculations are being assessed against field measurement to ensure reliability. A summary of SPR temperature measurements is given in Ref. 16.

A finite element structural creep analysis of cavern 11 was performed using material properties obtained from the site. The creep of salt is highly dependent on temperature, so the calculation of creep coefficients included thermal effects. As discussed, detailed thermal analyses were not available. The creep analyses were, therefore, performed at two bounding temperatures. The lower bound was chosen as 72°F and the upper bound was chosen as 117°F.

The finite element program calculates displacements at each requested time step. These displacements are added to the original nodal coordinates and used to compute a deformed cavern volume. The deformed cavern volumes and times are used to calculate fluid flow rates or cavern pressure increases (when included with density, mass and compressibility of fluids in the cavern). The predicted daily pressure increase in the cavern corresponding to the two different temperatures are:

Analysis Temperature (°F)	Predicted Pressure Increase (psi/day)
72	0.7s
117	3.00

A curve fit (exponential relationship) of the calculations at **72°F** and 117°F gives a pressure increase at **100°F** of 1.7 **psi/day** (Ref. 17).

The two models predict a greater pressure increase (.8 + 1.7 = 2.5 psi/day) than was actually measured. This discrepancy may indicate the need for some adjustments in the calculations and certainly indicates the need for cavern and temperature histories and for repeatable **creep/flow** field data.

The predictions for well 112 do not agree precisely with the field data, and it is probable that some redefinition of the model may be required. It is certain that additional field data are required on multiple wells and that these data should include borehole temperatures. The calculated pressure rise is a function of time since well completion and of well pressure. The calculated pressure rise is 0.9 psi/day at two months and 0.5 psi/day at six months (compare to the previously discussed 3.7 psi/day typical field observation).

Future Test Plans

We plan to expand the creep test program in early 1984 to include Sulphur Mines cavern 6, Bayou Choctaw caverns 18 and 20, Bryan Mound caverns 2 and 5, and the ten Big Hill wells. The cavern tests at these sites will also use a data collection system similar to that shown in Figure 8A in an attempt to eliminate the problems encountered on WH 11 early in the test.

We plan to continue analyses of the pressure data collected by the 0 & M contractor as part of the effort to quantify the primary variables in salt cavern creep closure. We also plan to run temperature logs in Big Hill wells to obtain a formation temperature profile and will evaluate temperature logs in caverns to obtain oil temperature profiles.

An active program is underway at Sandia to construct a cavern temperature model and to verify this model using cavern temperature logs as they become available. Another program is underway to construct a cavern behavior model that will use the temperature model in predicting cavern closure. This modeling effort will use the results of the creep test program and the analyses of the pressure data as inputs for model finalization and verification.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions reached from the data are:

- 1. This test method provides usable data for mathematical model comparison. and for baseline **data** to **be** used in the long-term monitor program.
- 2. **The** cavern mathematical models are in reasonable agreement with the field pressure data but additional development effort is required to improve temperature and closure predictions.

- 3. Efforts should continue to improve the data collection instrumentation and data should be collected from additional caverns, wells, and sites.
- 4. Recommended caverns and wells to be tested are BC 18, BC 20, BM 2, BM 5, SM 6, and all ten BH wells.
- 5. Accurate temperature **logs** should be run to provide better definition of the cavern temperature change over several 6-month time periods. In particular, thermal logs should **be** performed for caverns **which have not** recently **been** measured.

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Table 1.

Description of Wells

Well	Activity Type Date Ref .	Top of Salt (ft)	Production Casina
11	Completion 1962 1		
11	Workover 2 - 2 5 - 7 9 2	2056	9 5/8-36 lb/ft -2790'
11A	Re-entry 1 I-4-78 3	2100	13 3/8 - 61 lb/ft -2874 '
11B	Re-entry I-9-79 4	2100	13 3/8 - 54.5 & 61 lb/ft -2890'
112	Completion 2-27-81 6	204 l	20- 94 & 106.5 & 133 lb/ft -2463'

 $\label{eq:Table 2.}$ Cavern and $Well \mbox{ Parameters}$

Well	Total Elasticity (bbl/psi)	(A) Typical Pressure Rise (psi/day)	Closure (bbl/day)
SM6	21.5	1.0	tup min site
SM7	20.5	0.7	
SM 2-4-S	70	0.0	
WH6	57	0.2 (Ref 13)	
BC 20	21.6		
WH 11	49	1.5	60(B)
WH 112	.007	3.7	0.02

A. The pressure rise is a function of cavern pressure and all data are <u>NOT</u> at the same conditions.

B. Includes thermal expansion.

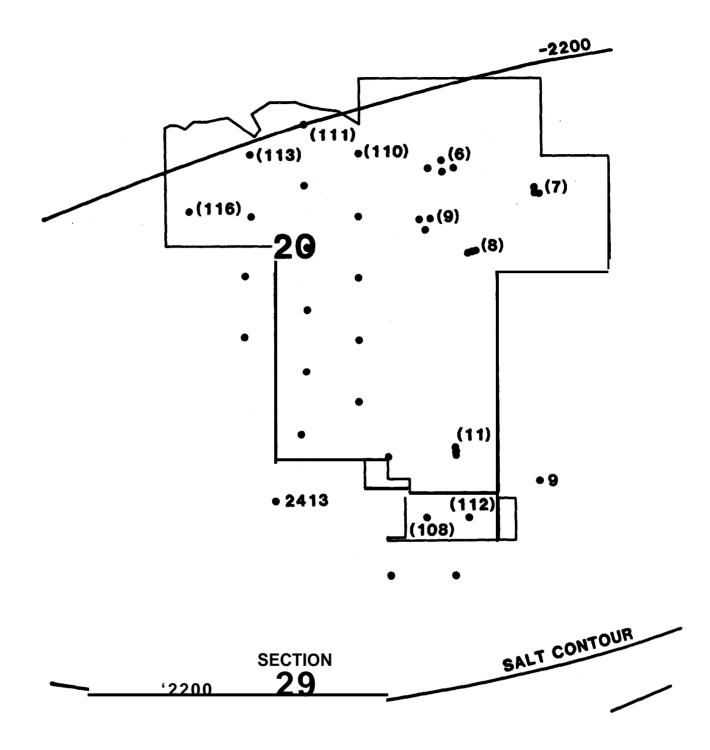


Figure 1. West Hackberry Site Layout.

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FIGURE 2. WH II SHAPE

SERIAL MINGER PARISE (COUNTY)	SURFACE CASING: SIZE 20 " DEL WI.	GE. SECTION TE COMPLETION DATE 2-19-79 PTH GRADE COUPLING TYPE E FACTOR E-FLUSH SED - SLURRY DENSITY P.P.C. COUPLING TYPE THE 2603' GRADE COUPLING TYPE THE FACTOR SECTION THE 2790' GRADE COUPLING TYPE THE 2790' GRADE THE 2790' GRADE
FORMATION DATA TOP OF CAPROCK 1529	LOG DATA	LOGGED DEPTE (FEET)
TOP OF SALT 2056	***************************************	
BOTTOM OF CAVEER 3780'		
CORE DATA DEPTH CORED From - To (ft)	DIAMETER OF CORE (Inches)	FORMATION TYPE
to		
REMARKS		
		LOUIS RECORDS AND ASSOCIATES, INC. LAFATETTE, LA Cavern Well #11
	20	DATE 2-25-29 BY MISS

SCRIPTION

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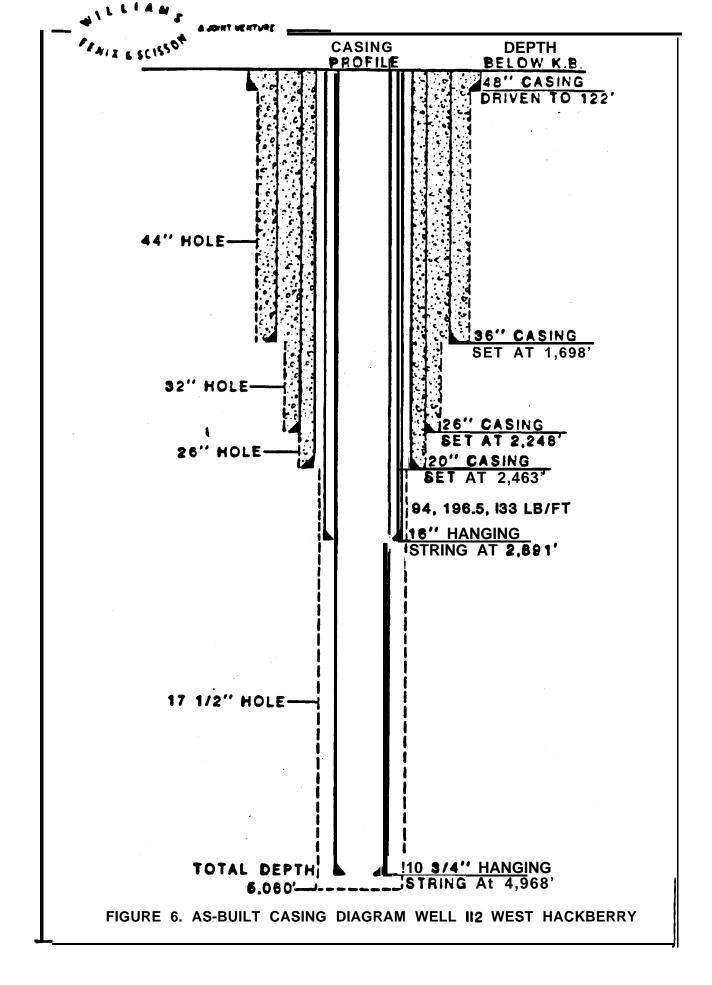
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BY

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GURE 5. WELL IIB DESCRIPTION

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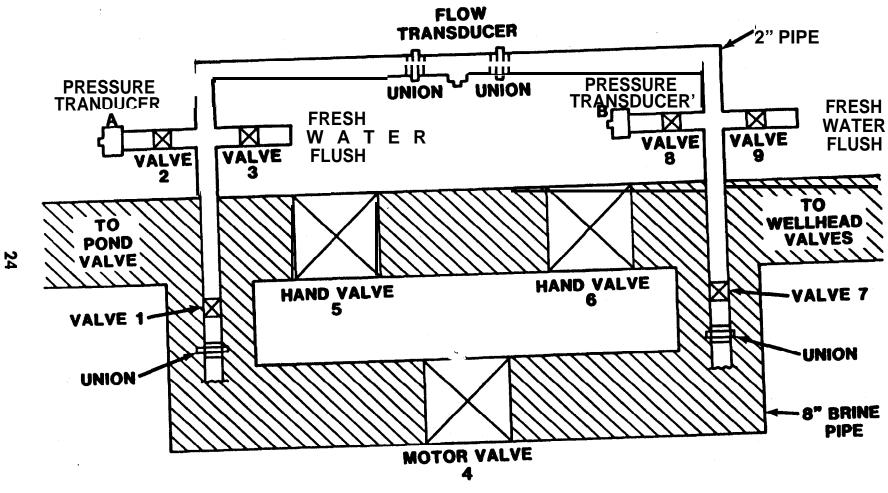


Figure 7. Pipe Diagram Creep Test - West Hackberry Cavern 11.

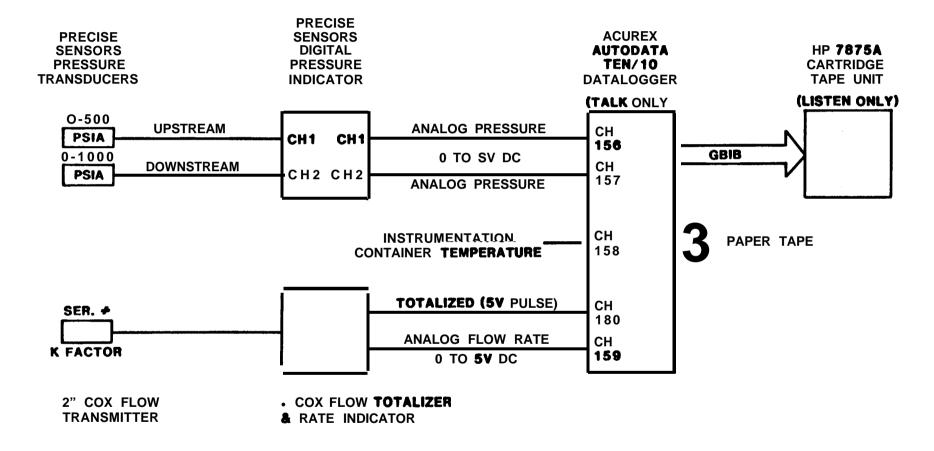


Figure 8. W.H. 11 Block Diagram Creep Test Instrumentation.

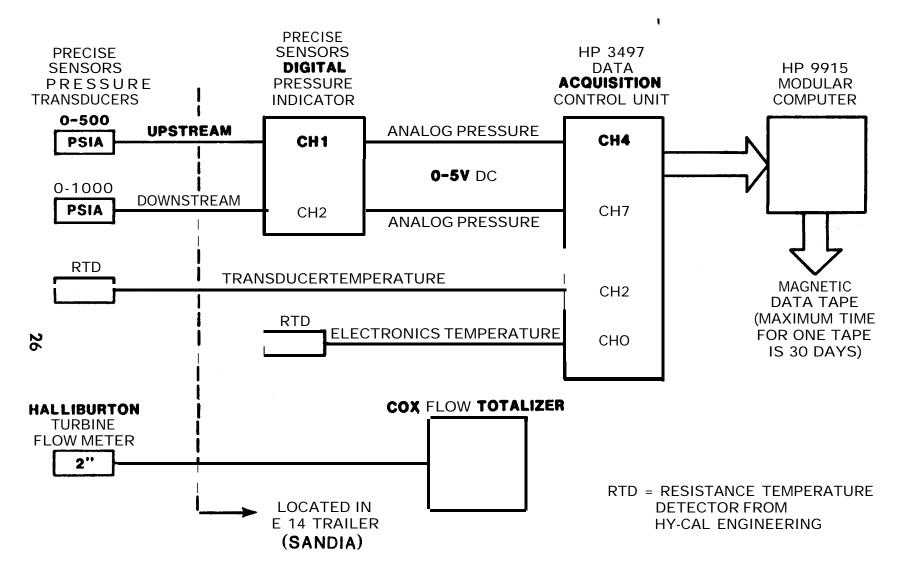
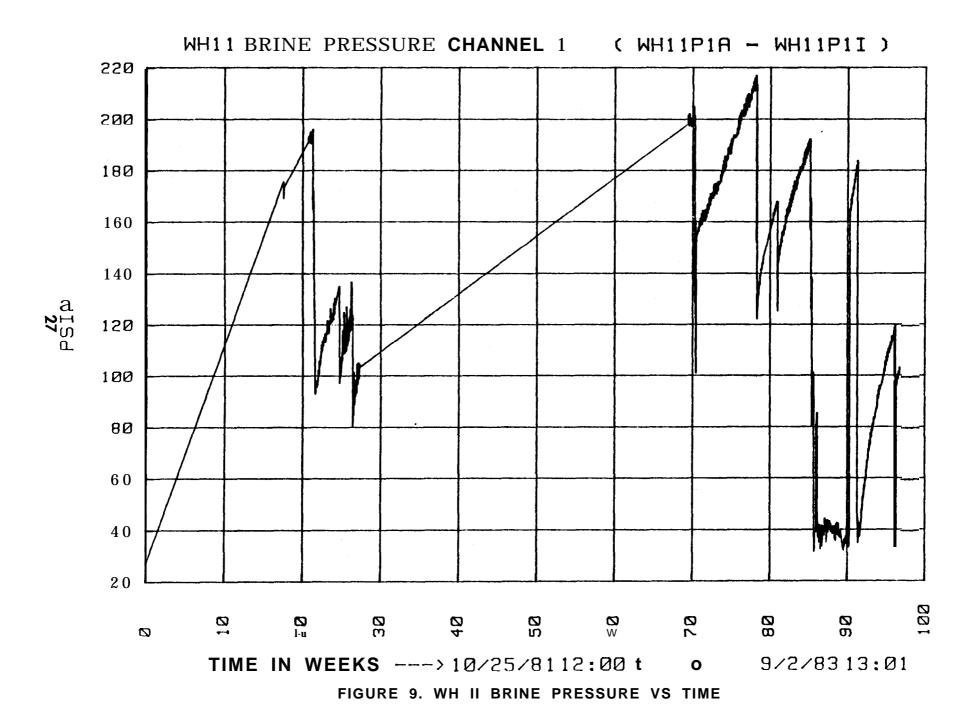
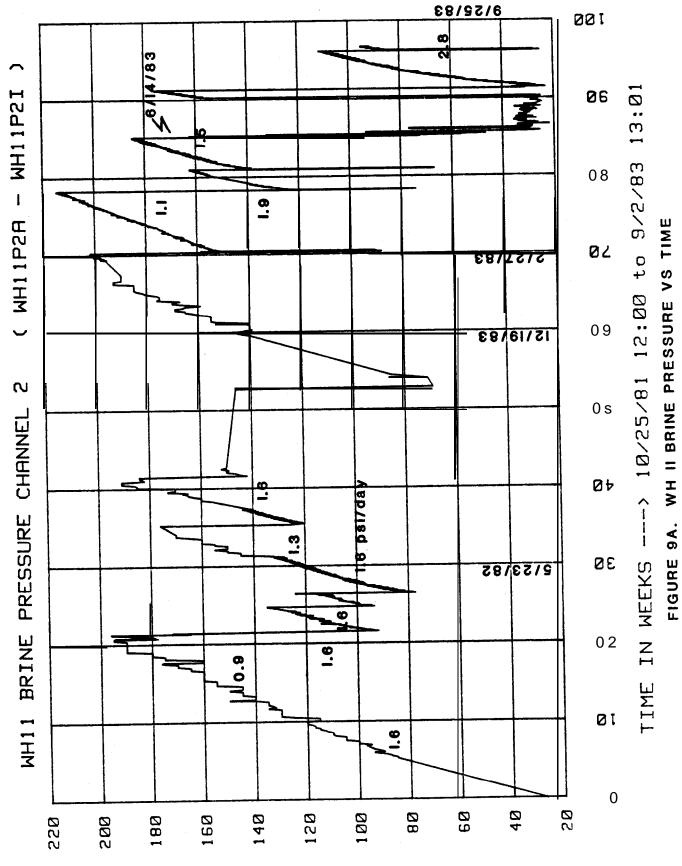
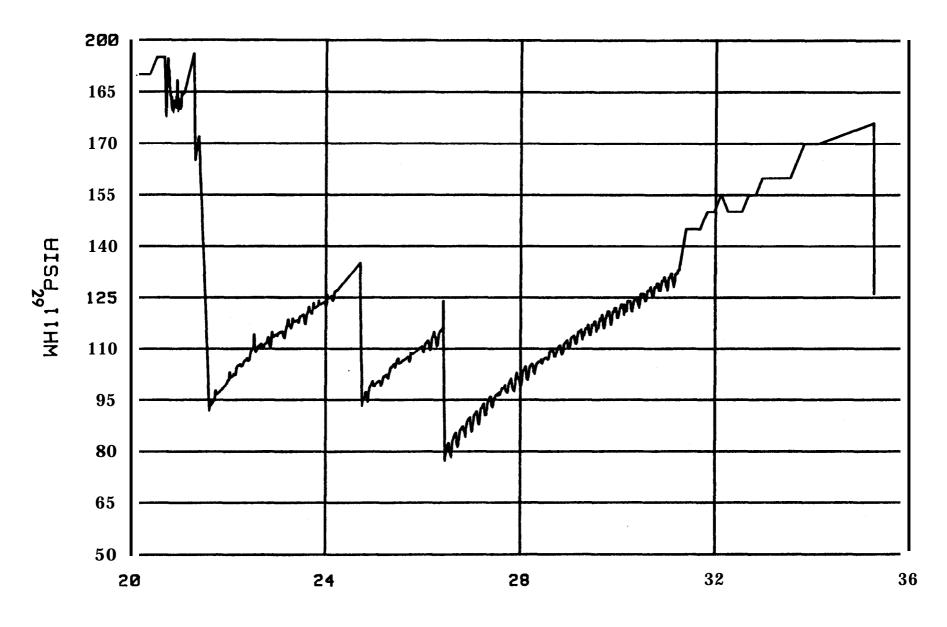


Figure 8A. W.H. 11. Block Diagram Creep **Test** Instrumentation.

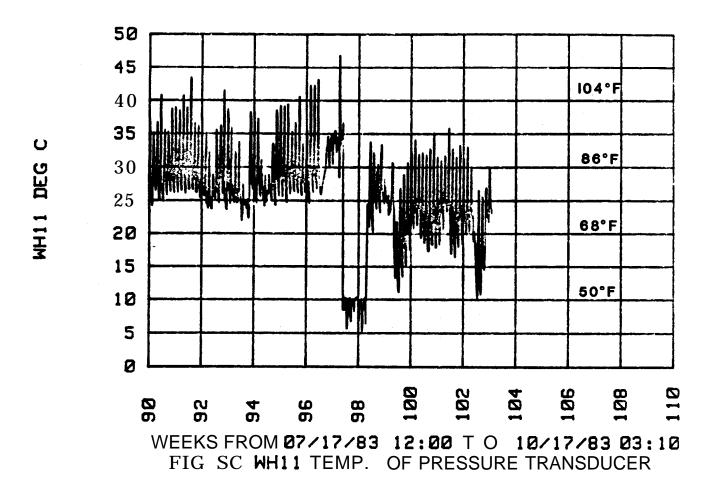


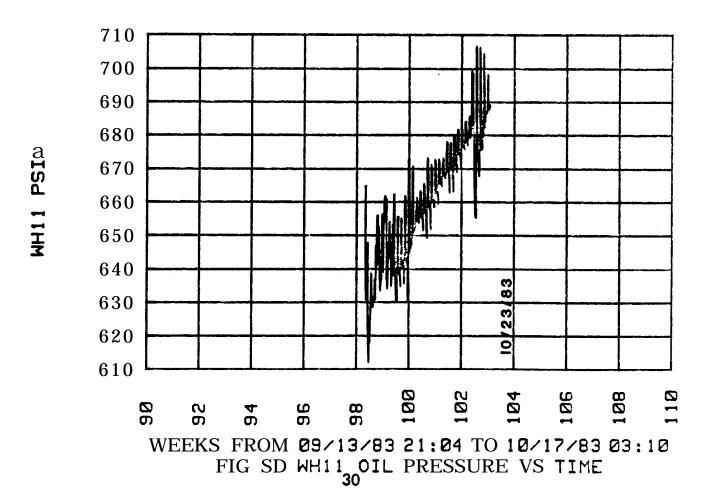


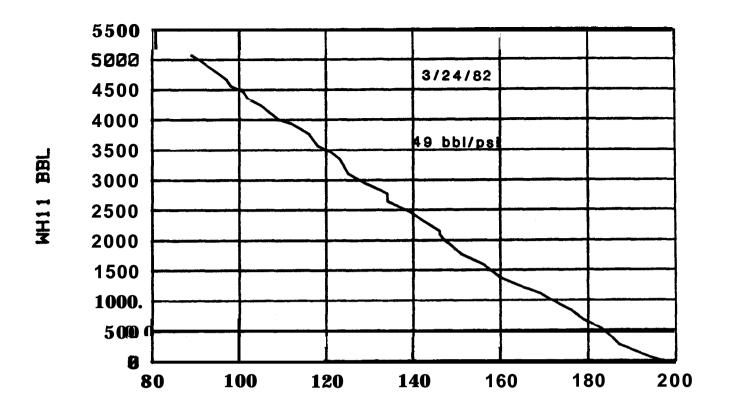
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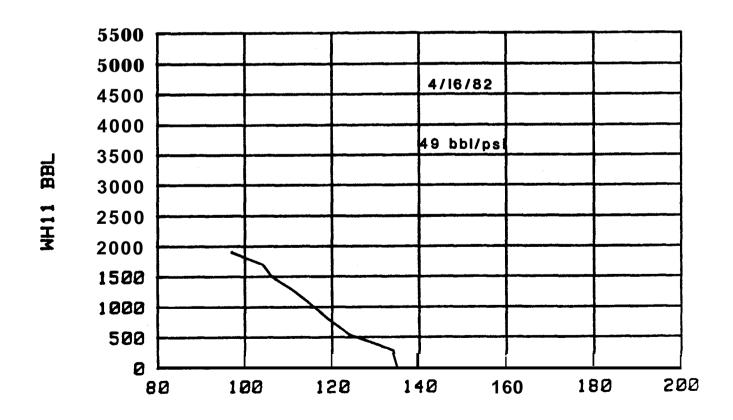
WEEKS (0=10/25/81)
FIG 9B WH11 BRINE PRESSURE VS TIME



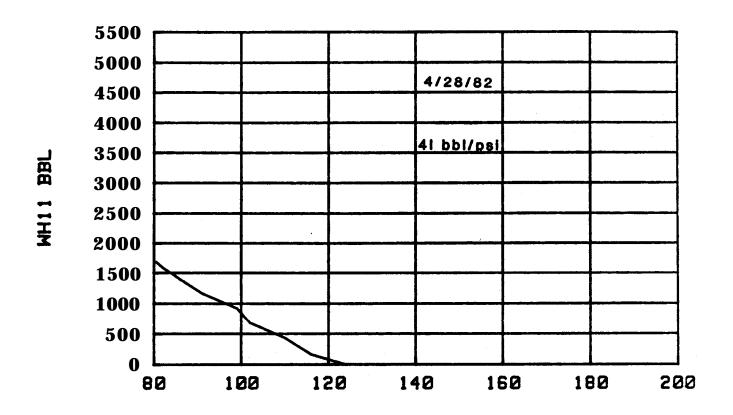




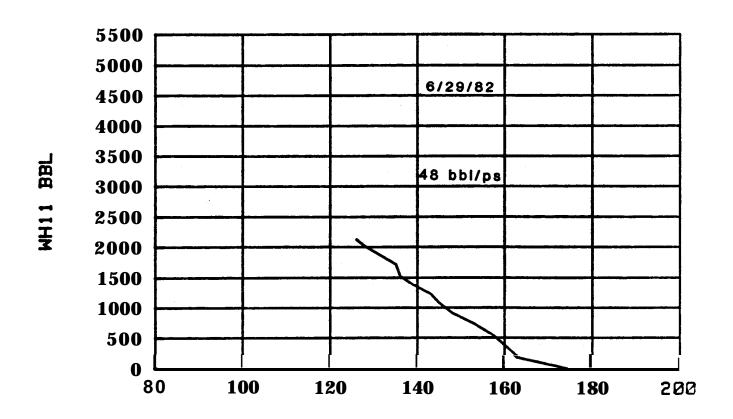
PSIA FIG 10A WH11 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE



PSIA
FIG 10B WH11 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE



PSIA
FIG 10C WH11 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE



PSIA FIG 10D WH11 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE

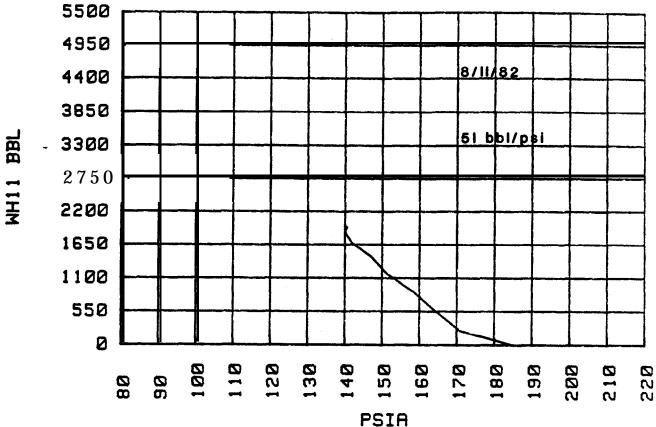


FIG 10E WH11 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE

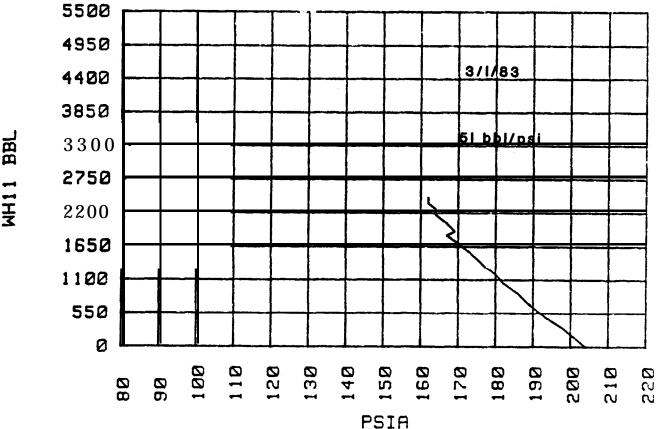


FIG 10F WH11 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE

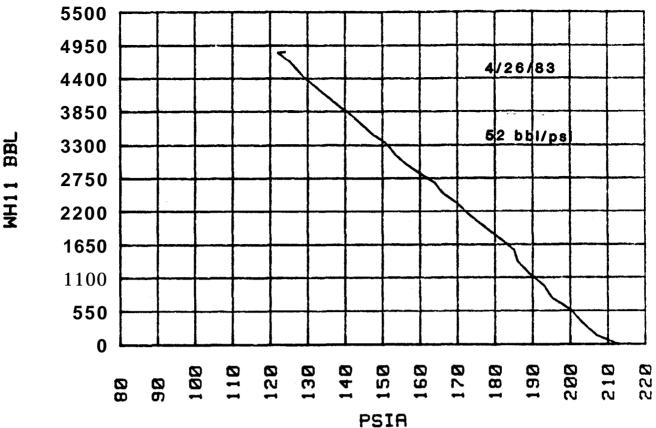
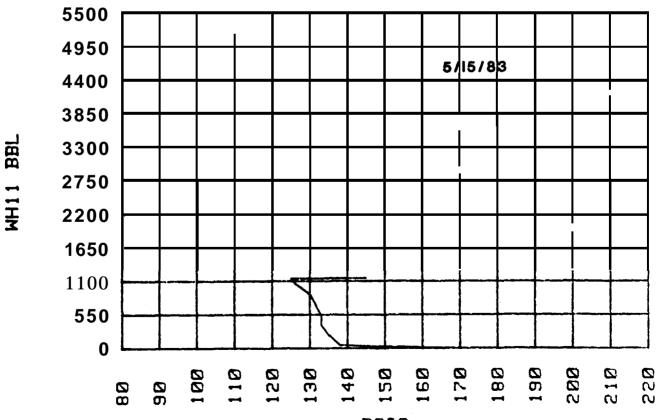


FIG 10G WH11 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE



PSIA FIG 10H WH11 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE

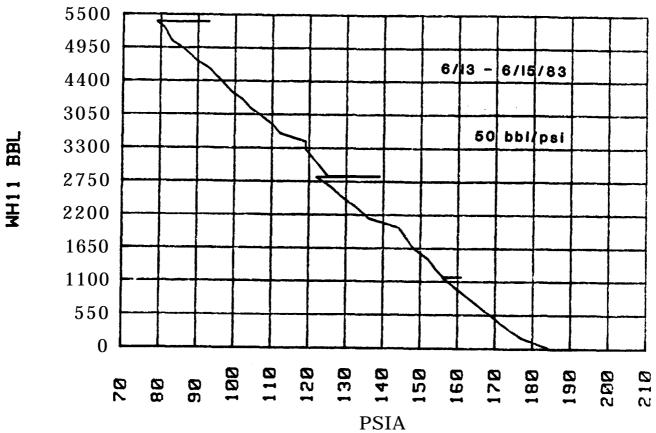


FIG 101 WH! I VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE

TYPICAL PRESSURE RISE IN WH 11

200

200

200

200

4 B 12 16

Figure 11.

TYPICAL PRESSURE CHANGE DURING BRINE REMOVAL FROM W.H. 11

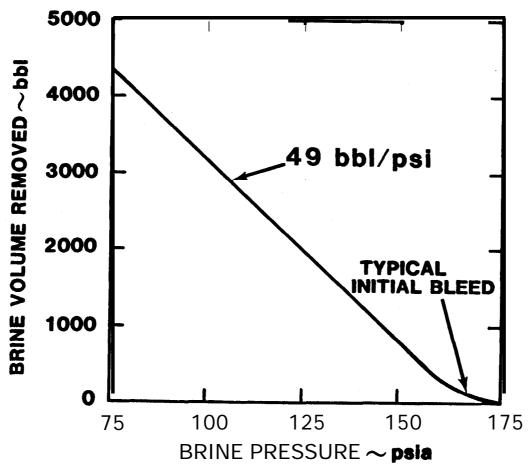
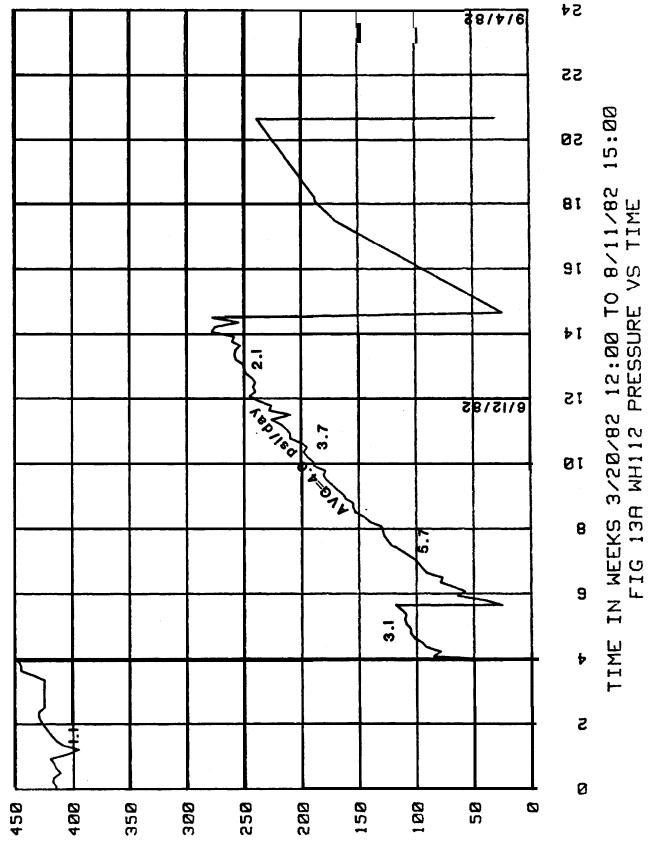
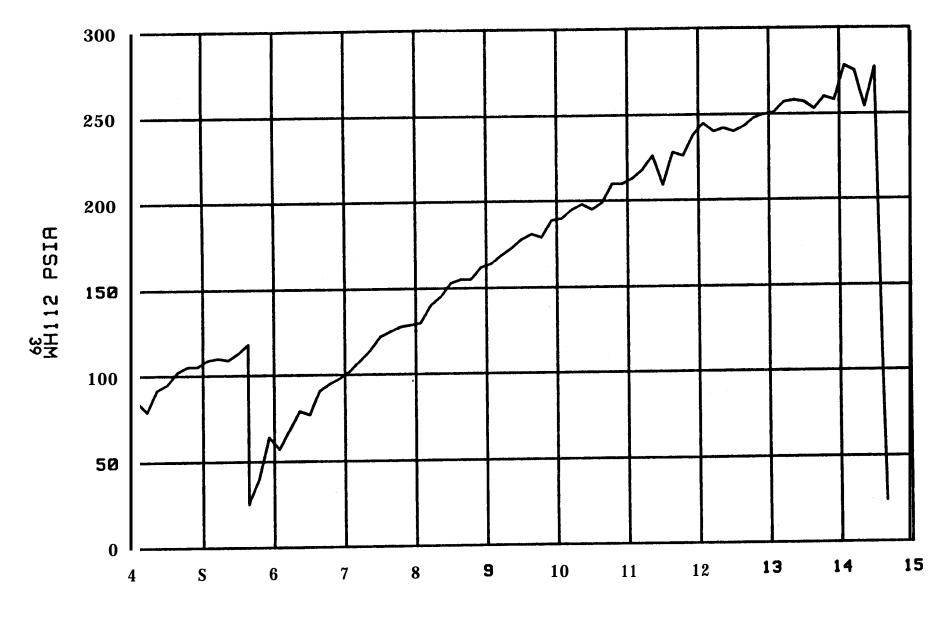


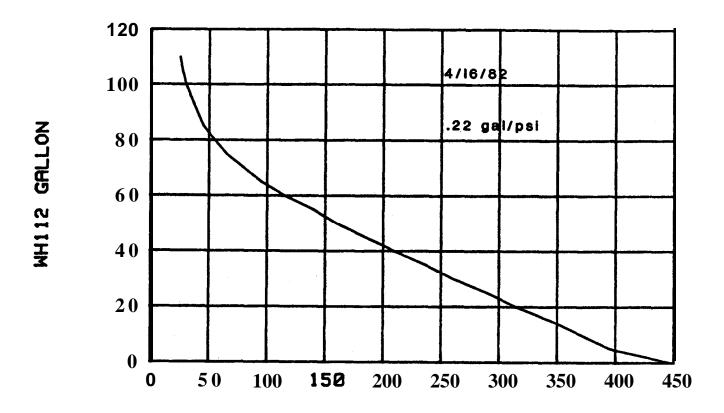
Figure 12.



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WEEKS (0=3/20/82)
FIG 13B WH112 PRESSURE VS TIME



PSIA
FIG 14A WH112 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE

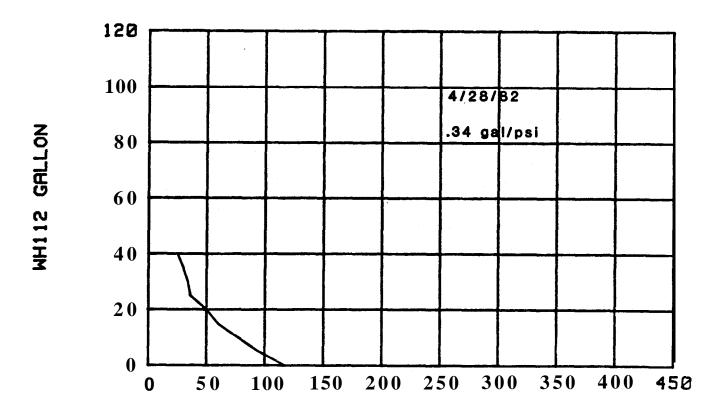
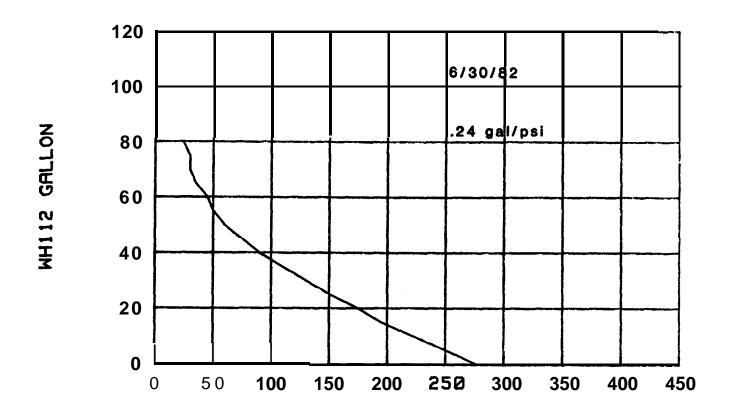
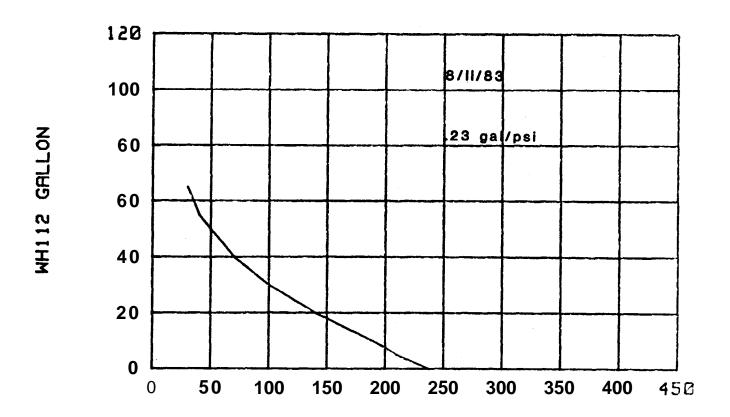


FIG 14B WH112 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE



PSIA FIG 14C WH112 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE



PSIA
FIG 14D WH112 VOLUME REMOVED VS PRESSURE

Appendix I

Calculation of Cavern Elasticity

A. Assumptions

Oil Compressibility = $3.8 \times 10^{-6} \text{ V/V} \times \text{psi}$

Brine Compressibility = $2.15 \times 10^{-6} \text{ V/V} \times \text{psi}$ As shown in Figure Al

Elasticity is **made up of** liquid elasticity **and** salt elasticity. Salt elasticity will be expressed in terms of volume change per total volume of the cavern per change in surface pressure: [V/V]/psi.

The period of measurement of elasticity is short enough that changes in temperature and salinity and salt creep are negligible.

B. Procedure

Total measured volume/psi minus fluid compressibility times fluid volume all divided by total cavern volume.

```
C. Calculation of Salt Elasticity
                <u>SM 6</u> (Ref 8)
                      \overline{(9.7 \text{ bbl/psi})/5.63} \times 10^6 \text{ bbl} = 1.72 \times 10^{-6}
                SM 7 (Ref 9)
                      \overline{(7.1 \text{ bbl/psi})/6.36} \times 10^6 \text{ bbl} = 1.16 \times 10^{-6}
                SM <u>2-4-5</u> (Ref 10)
                      70 bbl/psi - 2.15 x 10<sup>-6</sup> x 13.57 x 10<sup>6</sup> = 41 (41 bbl/psi)/13.57 x 10<sup>6</sup> bbl = 3.02 x 10<sup>-6</sup>
                WH 6 (Ref 11)
                      \overline{(38.5 \text{ bbl/psi})/8.61 \times 10^6 \text{ bbl}} = 4.47 \times 10^{-6}
                \underline{BC} 20 (Ref 12)
                      \overline{21.6} bbl/psi - 2.15 x 10<sup>-6</sup> x 5.2 x 10<sup>6</sup> = 10.4
                      (10.4 \text{ bbl/psi})/5.2 \times 10^6 \text{ bbl} = 2.00 \times 10^{-6}
                WH 1
                      \overline{49} bbl/psi - 2.15 x 10<sup>-6</sup> x .3 x 10<sup>6</sup> - 3.8 x 10<sup>-6</sup> x
                      8.2 \times 10^6 = 49 - 0.6 - 31.2 = 17.2
                      (17.2 \text{ bbl/psi})/8.5 \times 106 \text{ bbl} = 2.0 \times 10^{-6}
                WH 112
                      Borehole volume
                      .3552 bbl/ft x 698 ft + .3506 x 599 + .3407 x 1140 \text{ t}
                      .2975 x 2597 = 1619 bbl
                      .007 bbl/psi - 2.15 \times 10^{-6} \times .001619 \times 10^{6} = .004
                      (.004 \text{ bbl/psi})/1619 \text{ bbl} = 2.5 \times 10^{-6}
```

From:

Potter, Robert W., II and Brown, David L., "The Volumetric Properties of Aqueous Sodium Chloride Solutions Prom 0° to 500° at Pressure up to 2000 Bars Based on a Regression of Available Data in the Literature", Geological Survey Bulletin 1421-C, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1977.

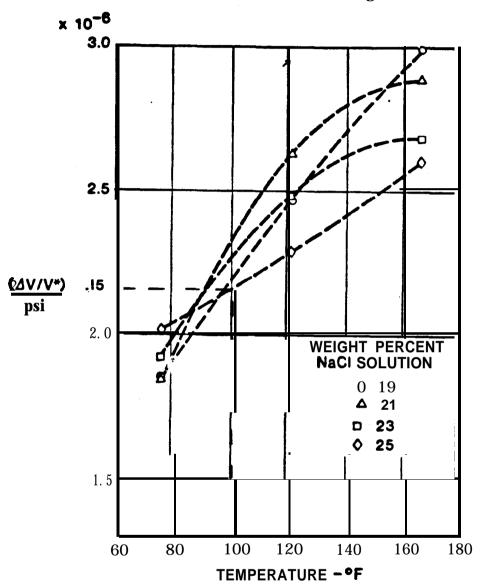


FIGURE AI. COMPRESSIBILITY OF BRINE

(V* 18 VOLUME AT ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE)

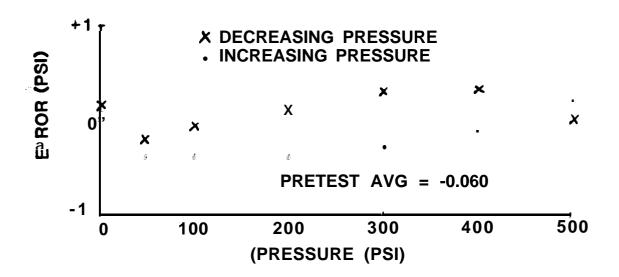
Appendix II.

Instrumentation Calibration

The pressure and flow instrumentation was calibrated before the test began and after the test was completed.

The 0 to 500 psia pressure transducer was calibrated as illustrated in Figure A-I. The net change of average transducer calibration error was from -.06 psi before the test to t.23 psi after the test. This small change in calibration error indicates that these transducers are acceptable for field tests and that no correction to the test data is required.

The flowmeter was calibrated as illustrated in Figure A-2. There appears to be a systematic error between the Sandia calibration and the Halliburton calibration but this error is small. The post test calibration showed less than a 5% difference in the test flowmeter relative to a new flowmeter. This small change in calibration error indicates that this flowmeter is acceptable for field tests and that no correction to the test data is required.



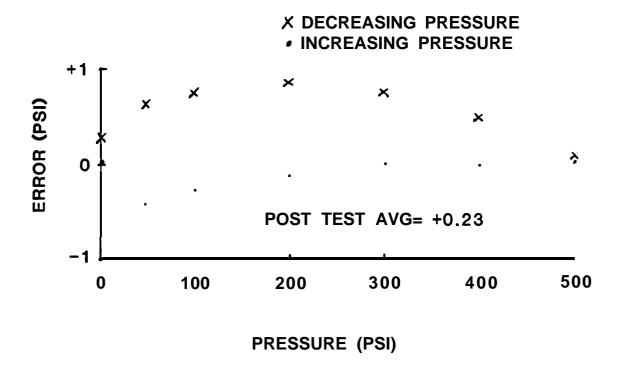


FIGURE A-2. PRESSURE TRANSDUCER CALIBRATION

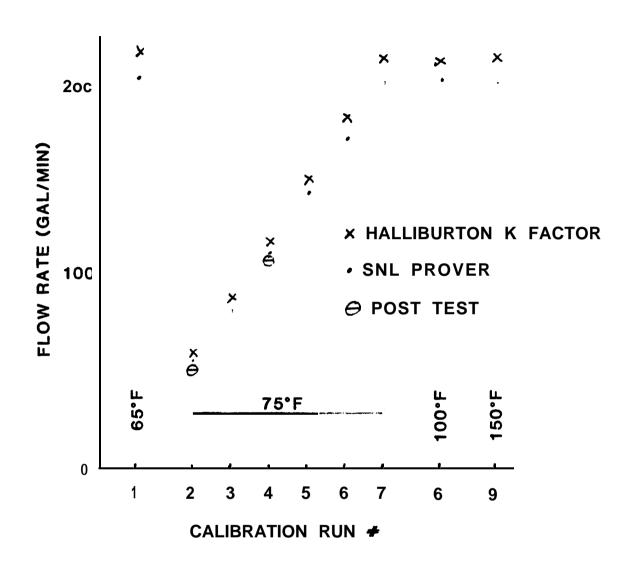


FIGURE A-3. HALLIBURTON FLOW METER CALIBRATION

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